لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

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AUGUST 1981—ZAHUR 1360

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EDITOR

M. G. AHMAD

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

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HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD, was born in 1835 in Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of World Reformer to combat the false Religious Philosophies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his fore-fathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world.

He initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement, to revive faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the Religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter by means of His signs, to expound and dissiminate spiritual beauties and moral excellences of the teachings of the Holy Quran, to wean men from war-like tendenies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of all the depressed races and nations of the world, to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences for their evil ways, to collect under one banner all the true lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, good-will and selfless fellow-service and a feeling of true brotherhood.

He passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion, Hazrat Hafiz Haji Hakim Maulvi Noor-ud-Din. After his death in 1914, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, was chosen as Head of the Movement. During his 52 years long leadership, he organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965 the electoral college named with one accord, Sahibzada Mirza Nasir Ahmad as Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

For further information about the Movement, its activities, aims, objectives and literature, enquires may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to :

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The Review of Religions

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

This is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement. It deals with religious, ethical, social and economic questions. It also provides Book Reviews.

It is open to all for discussing problems vital to the religious and spiritual welfare of man, but it does not give any assuraace to publish all articles received by the Editor, nor does it accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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M. G. AHMAD

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by The Late Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad

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نحمدہ ونصلی علی رسولہ الکریم

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

RABWAH, PAKISTAN

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Notes & Comments

Fasting is one of the fundamental tenets of Islam. The object of fasting is self-purification and thereby establishment of a living Communion with Almighty God. The month of fasting could truly be called the month of spring in the spiritual calendar. It brings with it the flowers of the pleasure of Allah. It waters the field of piety and righteousness that one prepares during the year. The harvest is reaped after a lot of sacrifice. The seed is to be watered and proper manure is to be given to it so that it can blossom and bring forth its fruit. All the year round the believers prepare the ground and sow the seed of righteousness in their souls till the month of fasting arrives when the seed is ready to blossom. They water the spiritual field with the water of their eyes and manure it with their parched lips.

On the completion of thirty days of fasting, flowers could be seen in the spiritual field in full bloom. The true and sincere believers then reap the rich harvest.

The rich harvest thus obtained naturally brings thank-

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fulness to God which is shown in the celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr festivities. The believers express their joy and thankfulness to God in prostrating before Him on Eid day.

We wish our readers a very happy and prosperous Eid and pray that this Eid may bring increasing sincerity and strengthening faith in Islam.

England has, in the past few days, been in the grip of the worst racial tension and violence. Property worth millions of pounds has been destroyed and set ablaze by hooligans mostly whites. Some non-whitss have even lost their lives and many more have been maimed for life or injured. It is an irony that such debasing and degrading behaviour should come from those who call themselves to be the most civilized and broad-minded people. Such unwise acts pour disgrace on the name of the country.

The teachings of Islam offer a bright and hopeful contrast to the views generally held regarding race and colour. The Holy Quran says :

> "O ye people ! We have created you of a male and female and made you tribes and families that you may know one another, but remember that only those of you are most honourable in the sight of Allah who are most pious".
>
> The Holy Prophet has said, "There is no ground for pride and precedence for an Arab over a non-Arab except through righteousness and piety". On another occasion he said that race or colour or class were no assets or handicaps in themselves. "Real merit lay in dutiful obedience to God and service to humanity".

These teachings strike at the very root of colour and racial prejudices. The Muslim societies have always been free from racial tensions. As a matter of fact a true Muslim is totally colour blind and has always treated members of other races and of different colours at par with other Muslims.

It is needless to say that as long as these absurd prejudices cling to the minds of white people, humanity can

never get rid of the dread of colour wars.

We hope that men's better nature will prevail and soon they will purge themselves of such unworthy racial sentiments which are now being translated into violence and destruction in may parts of Britian.

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In the early days of Islam, the Muslim citizens of the Islamic state were under conscription and under the law had to do compulsary military service. The non-Muslim citizens, however, were under no such obligation. They had the option either to enlist in the army like the Muslims or to pay a token tax, known as *Jazia*. On payment of which they were guaranteed protection and security against external aggression as well as internal disturbance and disorder. Therefore it was, that those who paid the *Jazia* were automatically exempted from service in the army. Thus one clause of the pact concluded between Hazrat Umar and the non-Muslim inhabitants of Jarjan is as follows :

> "We agree to guarantee protection and security to you on the condition that you continue to pay tax, which will be remitted in case you choose to join the army or the civil service".

It must be pointed out that *Jazia* is not a religious or Islamic tax. Even before the Muslims this tax was levied in certain countries and people used to pay it. As a matter of fact, there is historical evidence to prove that the tax under the Muslims was exactly the same as the tax lieved by Emperor Nosherwan's government in Iran. The famous Christian historian Jurjy Zaidan writes :

> "In the 5th century B. C. *Jazia* was imposed on the inhabitants of Asia Minor by the Greeks who took them under protection and saved them from the attacks of Phoenicians. These people used to pay it gladly enough in lieu of the security of life they enjoyed under the Greeks. Similarly they imposed an annual tax of 9 to 15 guineas on the residents of France when

they conquered Gual. From Greeks the tax was adopted by the Persians who called it *Gazeet*, which means, money the government realizes from the citizens every year. *Jazia* is the Arabic form of *Gazeet*. Hence it was not a religious tax by any means and was in fact an age old tax, on payment of which the government guaranteed the security of citizens".

The one condition basic to the realization of *Jazia* was that it was to be imposed only on those males who were able to earn and did actually earn. These below 20 and above 50, as also women, the insane, the slaves, the disabled, the paralytic, the deaf, the destitute, the monks and priests were exempt from this tax. Even a rich man could claim relief from *Jazia* in case of a year long unemployment.

Three different categories of assessees were defined to determine their financial status. Normal rate of *Jazia* was three rupees per annum. It was six rupees yearly from the middle class people and twelve rupees from the rich. The whole of the tax so realized was spent on the education, development, uplift and welfare of the Zimmi citizens.

On the other hand the Muslims were not exempt from taxes. They had to serve in the Army in lieu of *Jazia* and apart from voluntary contributions and emergency collections they had to pay *Zakat*, calculated on the basis of the value of their total holdings. The Muslim citizens, therefore, were under a much greater burden, for, in addition to service in the Army, they had to pay more than *Zimmi* citizens.

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Bilal was a negro slave, owned by the powerful Chief of Mecca Ummayya bin Khalaf. When he accepted the message of Muhammad and declared his faith in his prophethood and in Allah, his enraged master subjected him to all sorts of tortures and inflicted inhuman and unbearable torments on him. He was taken out in the scorching heat of the mid-day sun, was made to lie on the hot sand and burning stones and heavy

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rocks were placed on his chest and boys were made to dance over them. His master would then ask him to deny Allah and his Prophet and glorify *Lat* and *Uzza*, the gods of Mecca. But the poor slave remained firm in his faith and refusing to obey Ummayya, would only say *Ahad, Ahad*, God is one, God is one !

Furious and exasperated, the unbelieving master would hand him over to street urchins. They would put a cord round his neck and drag him through the streets over rough and jagged stones. They would put his bleeding semi-unconcious body, which would have by then become a lacerated mass of cuts and briuses, over sunbaked rocks and would shout with glee whenever he fainted with weakness or swooned mercifully into unconsciouness. But all the while only a steady murmur would be heard from Bilal, a faint muttering of *Ahad, Ahad*, God is one, God is one, would issue forth from the swollen and parched lips.

This state of affairs continued for a long period of time. Then God took pity on him. Abu Bakar paid ransom for Bilal and secured his freedom. But this freedom was no guarantee to safety. He was still mercilessly tormented and most cruelly treated by the Meccans. He was insulted and injured and persecuted beyond human edurance. But the black slave from *Habasha* remained steadfast and firm and showed unwavering faith under all sorts of Meccan torture. At last after thirteen long years, he was, alongwith others of his faith, banished from Mecca to seek refuge and find a home elsewhere !

Seven years had passed when the Meccans saw him again. But this was not the same bleeding mass of flesh and bones with whom they were acquainted. He was not the the same Bilal who was dragged about the town of Mecca by ropes tied round his ankles. Seven years had changed everything. The tables had completely been turned. The black slave had now come as a soldier of the victorious army, knocking at the gates of Mecca. Those who had seen him beaten and humiliated now found him, in the midst of the vanquishing army, inviting his enemies to peace and security, under

the standard held aloft by his Medinite brother Abu-Riwaha.

Mecca had given no peace to Bilal, only psychological and physical pain, humiliation and disgrace. How revengeful Bilal must have felt on this day of victory, on this day of his deliverance. To let him avenge the savage cruelties and utter humiliations suffered by him at the hands of Meccans was necessary but it had to be within the limits laid down by Islam. Accordingly, the Prophet did not let Bilal draw the sword and smite the necks of his former persecutors. That would have been un-Prophet-like. But the Prophet let him have his revenge. He handed to Bilal's brother the standard of Islam, and charged Bilal with the duty of offering peace to all his former enemies under the standard held aloft by his brother. There was a beauty and an appeal in this sort of revenge. We have to visualise Bilal marching in front of Abu Riwaha and inviting his enemies to peace. His passion for revenge could not have lasted. It must have dissolved as he advanced inviting Meccans to peace under the banner raised by his brother.

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Writing about the brotherhood that Islam teaches, Mr. Abd al-Rahman Azzam writes in his book "The Eternal Message of Muhammad".

"The brotherhood which Muhammad preached remains the finest quality that dwells in the hearts of present-day Muslims, even though they may be somewhat removed from the spirit of Islam. This is as readily discernible to modern-day travellers in Muslim lands as it was to Ibn-Battutah seven centuries ago.

"I became conscious of it for the first time as a young man in 1913, while visiting Albania during the Balkan wars. I knew no one in that country. Arriving by way of the Adriatic and disembarking at Kotor, I proceeded to Cetinje, the old capital of Montenegro when the inhabitants of the Mountain were at war with the Ottoman state. I posed as a correspondent for a British newspaper, but actually I was trying to enlist on the side of the Turkish and Albanian de-

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fende's of Shkoder. Noticing an Islamic name on a shop in the city, I introduced myself to the owner and immediately received a warm welcome that seemed almost pre-arranged, notwithstanding the fact that we could converse only by signs. Before long, the owner introduced a khojah (faqih) who knew a little Arabic, and we began to understand each other. The shopkeeper looked after all my affairs until I arrived in Shkoder. Throughout my journeys from north to south, I was passed on from hand to hand as each person entrusted my care to the next. It is doubtful that so much attention would have been lavished upon me had I been among my own kinsfolk. This was a tribute to the brotherhood of Islam in the trying days of the Balkan wars.

"I encounted this very same spirit in North Africa from Egypt to Algiers during the First World War. I experienced it again in India in the welcome accorded me by those who delighted in the knowledge that Egypt had become an independent nation and that I was its envoy to Afghanistan.

"This spirit, engendered by the call of Muhammad's Message to brotherhood, I have also observed in Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and other lands where Muslims reside. In this spirit the Afghan in the East or the Fulani from West Africa takes pride ; to this spirit he entrusts himself when he covers thousands of miles on his way to Mecca, for he moves on from relative to relative, from friend to friend, until he arrives in Arabia, where Muhammad first sent out the call to this universal brotherhood.

"Once, on the second day of a five-day journey by car in 1938 from Riyad, the capital of the Najd, to Mecca, I saw two men proceeding on foot. When I inquired as to their points of origin and their destination, I discovered that they could not understand Arabic, for they were foreigners hailing from Kandahar in Afghanistan. Since the pilgrimage season was approaching, I surmised that they were enroute to Mecca, and offered them a ride. During the nights spent on the way,

and despite the fact that we did not understand each other's language, the spirit of brotherhood manifested itself in every expression. These men had travelled from afar with no possessions in this world other than the brotherhood bequeathed by Muhammad in his Message that related them with the Baluchis, Persians, and Arabs whose countries they had crossed on their way to Mecca.

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"Undoubtedly, the manifestation of brotherhood decline in those Muslim lands where the observance of Islamic religious tenets is weak owing to the emergence of racial barriers and particularly to the triumph of materialism over the soul of men, which greatly damages the bonds of brotherhood even in the home and within the family.

"The impact of Muhammad's call to brotherhood and mercy on the history of the Muslims has been of greater consequence than any corresponding call in the history of mankind. Some authorities might disagree and cite Jewish solidarity as an example. However, this solidarity is rather product of an exceptional set of circumstances derived from persistent persecution of the Jews and their subsequent dispersal in many lands where they had to accept the status of a minority; what unites them is a set of religious and racial ties based on blood, not the belief that calls to human brotherhood. As for the brotherhood which Muhammad preached and which Islam planted in the heart of man, its most exalted days were days of past glory. The Ottomans carried this concept into Eastern Europe, as the Arabs before them had carried it into western Europe and unknown parts of Africa and Asia. People under their banner were as equal as the teeth of a comb: no preference was shown for an Arab over a non-Arab except in regard to his piety and love of peace."

We are reproducing below a few dreams and visions of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

1. I saw in my dream that a canal was running near

our garden and I said : The garden will be nurtured within a few days' time and even if no more water is available, it will flourish. My interpretation is that the garden means my community and the canal signifies divine help and support which will be manifested in the many branches of the trees of the garden (Al-Hakam, Vol. X, No. 6, February 17, 1906, p. 1).

2. I saw in my dream that a large group was standing with me and an official came and said : Why should this group not be scattered ? I said to him : There is no opposition on the part of this group. They are only being taught and trained. Then the official looked up to heavens (as if he was an angel) and spoke a few words which I did not follow. Then he addressed me and said : Peace ; and then left (Al-Hakam, Vol. X, No. 6, February 17, 1906, p. 1).

3. Last night I saw in my dream that a robe which had a good deal of gold work on it had been given to me as a present from God, a thief ran away with it but someone ran after him and caught him and took away the robe from him. Thereafter the robe changed into a book of the name of Tafsir Kabeer and I was given to understand that the thief had run away with it in order to destroy the Tafsir.

The interpretation is that by thief is meant Satan, who desires to remove my writings from the notice of people, but that he will not succeed. The Tafsir (commentary) being shown in the form of a robe means, that it will be a source of honour and ornament for me. Allah knows best (Al-Hakam Vol. X, No. 31, September 10, 1906, p. 1).

4. I saw in my dream that I was wearing an ample, beautiful and bright robe which reached down my ankles and gave forth shining rays. I was walking in the company of some people. (Al-Hakam Vol. X, No. 33, September 24, 1906, p. 1).

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A Few verses from the Holy Quran

و ان كنتم فى ريب مما نزلنا على عبدنا فاتوا بسورة من مثله وادعوا شهداء كم من دون الله ان كنتم صادقين ـ فان لم تفعلوا ولن تفعلوا فاتقوا النار التى وقودها الناس والحجارة اعدت للكافرين .

If you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a chapter like unto it and call upon your helpers beside Allah to help you out, if you are truthful. But if you do it not, and never shall you be able to do it, then guard against the Fire, whose fuel are men and stones, which is prepared for the disbelievers (2 : 24-25).

These verses contain a challenge to the disbelievers: If you are in doubt concerning the revelation that We have sent down to Our servant, that is to say, if you imagine that he has concocted it himself, or has learnt it from evil spirits, or it is some kind of incantation or poetry, or you have some other doubt concerning its genuineness, then, if you are truthful in your claim, produce yourselves as much as equal to one chapter of it, and in doing so call upon your helpers or gods to help you in this enterprise. But if you fail in it, and be sure you can never succeed, then try to guard yourselves against the Fire, whose fuel are men and stones, which has been prepared for the disbelievers. (Braheen Ahmadiyyah, Part 111. p. 220, footnote 11).

If you are in doubt concerning the Quran being the Word of God, then produce a chapter like unto it, but if you fail in it, and be sure you can never succeed, then try to guard yourselves against the Fire, whose fuel are men and stones, which has been prepared for the disbelievers. I warn our opponents, however, that before they look for a compo-

sition which may be set forth as a rival to the Quran, it would be necessary for them to make sure that such composition claims to be unique in the sense that no one can produce its like, it would be idle to put it forth as unique in that sense. Furthermore, it would be necessary to prove that the rival composition possesses all the excellences, external and internal, which characterise the Quran, for if the composition concerned lacks such excellences utterly it would be a confession of ignorance and folly to set it forth as a rival to the Ouran. Bear well in mind that it is as impossible to compose the like of the Quran as it is to fashion the like of anything which is fashioned by God. That is why the leading poets of Arabia, whose mother-tongue was Arabic, and who were by talent and training well versed in all the subtleties and niceties of style, syntax and the like, were forced to concede that the Quran was above and beyond the reach of human talent and effort. This is not confined to the Arabs. There are many among you who were spirituality blind who have gained spiritual sight through the beneficence of this perfect light, and there are many who were spiritually deaf who have gainad spiritual hearing through the beneficance of the Quran. Even today that light is dispelling darkness in all directions, and the rays of truth emanating from the Quran continue to illumine the hearts.

It is a fact that as the range of vision expands the greatness of the Quran is better appreciated. Some of the bigoted western orientalists and thinkers have felt compelled to acknowledge that the Quran is machless in its eloquence. So zealous a Christian as Godfrey Higgins has recorded that certain passages in the Quran are unmatched in their loftiness, and this is confirmed by Ewart.

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The Arya Samajists who hold that the Vedas are the final and last word in revelation claim that they are unique and matchless. We wish to proclaim, however, that is it incumbent on a person who denies the uniqueness of the

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Quran to exhibit from some other book the qualities that we here set out as establishing such uniqueness. Thus if the Arya Samajists believe that the Vedas compare favourably with the Quran in respect of these qualities, it lies upon them to establish this. To make a claim and to advance no more than irrelevant and erratic observations in support of it argues a lack of good faith Good sense and sobriety demand that claim should be supported with valid arguments. Where these are lacking the best course is to refrain from asserting a claim which can only be urged on the basis of irrelevancies.

It should be realized that the eloquence of the Quran is a pure and holy eloquence, which has the lofty purpose of conveying the light of wisdom and truth in sublime language, so that full knowledge of the principles and details of faith should be set forth in a well-arranged and well-argued sequence. Details are set forth where they are needed, principles alone are mentioned when these would suffice. No spiritual truth is left out, and yet all that is set out fills a need and is indispensible. Everything is expressed in language which is so expressive and yet so clear and sober that it is not possible to improve on it. With all this it is replete with spiritual blessings. This is what the Quran claims and establishes. It repeatedly affirms that it is not possible for any creature to produce its like. It is only fair that anyone desiring to take up this challenge must produce a book which possesses the excellence that the Quran possesses. (Baraheen Ahmadiyyah, Vol. IV, pp. 306-399, sub-footnote 3)

If a fair-minded person were to ponder the high grade verities that are comprehended in the Surah Fatiha, and then cast a glance over the fine points and ingenuities with which the Surah abounds, and then observe the beauty and economy of expression which has condensed a vast wealth of meaning within the briefest phrasoelogy, and then contemplate the glory of the composition, how fluent, clear and smooth it is, running like a pellucid, transparent stream of water, and then

reflect over its spiritual qualities which, purifying the hearts in a supernatural way of the manifold darknesses inherent in human nature, convert it into a receptacle of divine lights, of which we continue to set forth proofs as we proceed with the exposition of the purpose of this book, he would appreciate the exalted status of the Quran which cannot be matched through human effort and which nothing can exceed. If, daspite the observation of all these excellences the uniqueness of the Quran remains doubtful in the eyes of a dark-minded person, the remedy for such a case is furnished by the Quran itself: If you are in doubt concerning the divine origin of this discourse, then produce the like of any of its chapters. But if you fail, and you certainly cannot succeed, then try to guard yourselves against the Fire which has been prepared for the disbelievers, whose fuel are the disbelieving men and their idols who feed the blaze of hell with their sins and misdeeds. This is a decisive pronouncement made by God, the Exalted, in condemnation of those who deny the miraculous origin of the Quran. Those who still persist in their denial and despite their helplessness in face of the challenge to produce the like of it, desist not from indulging in irrelevant and erratic criticism, have no way of deliverance from their error left open to them in this world. In their case the only remedy is that cited in the decisive divine pronouncement just referred to. (Baraheen Ahmadiyyah, Vol. IV. pp. 544-549 footnote 11.)

These verses admonish the disbelievers. If you are in doubt concerning the divine origin of the revelation that We have sent down to Our servant, and imagine that it is within the range of human capacity to produce the like thereof, then go ahead and produce a chapter which comprehends the same external and internal excellences. But if you fail to do it, and you certainly cannot succeed, then try to guard yourselves against the Fire, whose fuel are stones (idols) and men; that is to say, idol-worshippers, polytheists and disobedient persons are the cause of the blazing of that Fire. If there had been no idol worship, no polytheism, no disbelief and no disobedience

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in the world, that Fire would not have been kindled, nor would it have blazed up. In other words, these are the fuel of that Fire, being the *raison d'etre* of its blazing up. (Surma Chachm-i-Arya, pp. 14-15, footnote.)

Know you not that the Quran claims miraculous eloquence by a challenge in the arena, because contemporary Arabs were far famed for eloquence and elegent expression. They prided themselves in surpassing each other in eloquence and brilliant oratory, and the fruits and flowers of rhetoric. Their contests were over novel odes and inspiring addresses, but they were not conversant with philosophic niceties nor had they breathed the fragrance of divine lore. Their reflections roamed in the fields of lyrics and humorous or beguiling poetry. They were not capable of spinning out philosophic discourse though they had for a long time cultivated fondness for prose compositions, poetry and literary conceits, and were accepted and welcomed among their contemporaries, and possessed linguistic fluency and were given to outstripping each other in this field. So God admonished them: If you are in doubt concerning that which we have sent down to Our servant, then produce a chapter like unto it. But if you fail, and you certainly cannot succeed, them try to, guard yourselves agains the Fire whose fuel are men and stones, which has been prepared for the disbelievers. He also admonished them: If all men, high and low were to gather together to produce the like of this Quran, they would not be able to produce the like thereof, even though they all combined in the effort (17 : 89).

Thus the disbelievers were routed by this challenge and declined it. Vanquished in the field of literary composition, in their chargin they had recourse to the sword and the lance. But several of them believed, recognizing the miraculous quality of Ouranic eloquence. Of them was Labeed bin Rabe'ati Aamiri, author of the Fourth Suspended Ode, who survived till the advent of Islam, accepted it, and exhibited great zeal in its cause. He died in the 41st year after the Hijra. Like

him many others acknowledged the eloquence of the Quran and its high literary merit and affirmed that the Quran is full of beautifully constructed passages and sweat metaphors and delicious discourses and philosophic dissertations. Whoever looked into it with a penetrating glance ran towards Islam and joined the believers. Had the Quran fallen from the highest standards of eloquence and rhetoric, the matter would have presented no difficulty for the opponents of Islam. They would have said: Sir, the composition that you present to us and the discourse that you have brought us possesses no literary merit and is not even accurate. Its meaning is obscure and its diction is faulty. It is full of mistakes and irrelevancies, and contains unfamiliar expressions. There is no need for us to produce its like and to copy it step by step. Then cease to eulogize your rhapsodies and keep away from us for your utterances are not worthy of attention in the estimation of our recognized literary authorities. But the disbelivers of Arabia did not adopt this attitude. On the contrary, they acknowledged the high literary merits of the Quran and were so deeply impressed by them that they were impelled to exclaim; This is plain magic. Many of them believed in this miracle of the Quran and confessed that its logic was convincing and irrefutable, and that they were not able to penetrate to its depths. They affirmed that this was a discourse far above human discourses, that the whole of it was kernel and that no part of it was shell, that it was glorious and sweet and that it was like a vast reservoir of pure water which was not diminished by the drinking of it by multitudes. They did not utter a word in criticism or denigration of it. The more they reflected on it, the more they were impressed by it. Most of them could not control their emotions while they listened to it, and prostrated themselves sobbing in admiration of it.

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This is what we have gathered from the Quran and the sayings of the Holy Prophet, and we have set it down

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truly, faithfully and honestly. Nor have we discovered a single phrase in disparagement of the Quran uttered by a contemporary Christian or idol-worshipper, though they were far more competent critics than you are, you ignorant ones! Your saying that the Quran contains words alien to the vocabulary of the Quraish is a criticism proceeding from lack of knowledge or from malice, and is not evidence of intelligent reflection. Know then that eloquence and elegance depend upon words, phrases and expressions which have gained currency among literary circles, whether they form part of the vernacular of a people or are borrowed from another tongue and have been accepted and absorbed in the vernacular. This borrowing may have been for any of various reasons, but so long as it was not resorted to on account of the poverty of the vernacular there can be no valid objection to it. The same would apply in the case of compositions which stand above all others by virtue of their lofty status and their power and grandeur. A foreign word which has been accepted and adopted by masters of the literary art does not offer an occasion for criticism. On the contrary, it may often enhance the beauty and force of a composition and minister to the pleasure and enjoyment of the reader or listener. (Nurul Haq, pp. 108-112).

The Quran puts forward, in support of its miraculous origin, the challenge : If you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a chapter like unto it. These are spiritual marvels. As the Quran has set forth reasoning in support of the unity of the Divine which is unique, so in respect of its Wisdom, eloquence and elegonce also it is unique and no man can produce the like of it. As it says at another place : If all men, high and low, were to join together to produce the like of it they would not be able to do so. (17 : 89)

Let no one think that these spiritual marvels are mere fancies of the Muslims. I am grieved to recall that Sir Syed

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Ahmad has also fallen into the error of denying the uniquencess of the Quran as a literary marvel. He has asserted that a person of average intelligence can produce the like of it. He does not realize that divine testimony is that the Holy Prophet : Recites pure scriptures comprising all lasting commandments (98 : 4). The Quran is thus a Book which comprises all heavenly books and spiritual verities. The connotation of book is a compilation of all beneficient directions which are naturally considered worthy of being followed. The Quran comprises all such wisdom and insight. It contains nothing that is vain and without purpose. It expounds all that is needed and leaves out nothing. Its every facet is a sign and a marvel. Should any one contest this, we shall be ready to demonstrate it in every respect. The very existence and unity of the Divine Being are vehemently questioned today. Christian divines have exerted themselves in defence and support of these doctrines ; but whatever they have said and written essays to depict the concept of God set forth in the Quran, and not a helpless God whose enemies compassed his death by crucifixion. We make bold to affirm that whoever undertakes to write on the existence of God will be compelled to set forth the concept of the Divine which has been put forward by Islam, for every leaf of the book of nature bears His impress, and man naturally carries within himself His likenses. Thus every attempt at His description will proceed in the direction of the concept put forward by Islam, and this in itself is a grand marvel. Should this be disputed, a simple test would suffice. Let such a one, who denies the divine origin of the Quran prepare a thesis on the Existence of God and assemble all arguments in support of it. We shall match every such argument from the Quran. We shall do the same in respect of a thesis on the Unity of God. Should any one assemble arguments claiming that they are not to be found in the Quran, or set forth verieties or essential teachings, asserting that they are not comprised in the Quran, we shall clearly demonstrate how true and well-foun-

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ded is the claim of the Quran that it comprises all such verities and lasting commandments. The same would be the case if any one should be inclined to collate arguments in support of the true religion which is in accord with human nature. In short, the Quran comprises all eternal verities and expounds all spiritual mysteries, but enlightenment concerning them is vouchsafed only to those who are pure of heart. Allah, the Exalted has announced: Only the pure of heart can penetrate to its true meaning (56 : 80).

Then there is the sequence. For instance, if the seven verses of the Fatiha were arranged in a different sequence, they would fail to convey all the exalted meanings and all the bright aims and objectives that are revealed through the current sequence of the verses. The same applies throughout. Take the brief Sura Ikhlas. A different sequence would fail to convey all the connotations with truth and wisdom with the same delicacy and tenderness as does its current sequence. This too is a miraculous quality of the Quran. I am astounded when some ignorant ones describe Maqamat Hariri or the Seven Susponded Odes as unique and peerless, thus casting a doubt on the uniqueness of the Quran. They forget that the author of Maqamat Hariri did not claim uniqueness for his work, and acknowledged the miraculous quality of the Quran. Besides, it is not a question merely of literary excellence, there are also the much higher qualities of truth and righteous guidance. The works cited are entirely devoid of truth and wisdom. The miraculous quality of the Quran derives from both these aspects, literary excellence combined with truth and wisdom. The Quran is unique in this respect and shines with the brilliance of the sun, from whichever point of view it is beheld. Its merit is not merely a striking verbal juxtaposition, like that of the Gospel, requiring the turning of the left cheek when the right is smitten, without references to its practicability and wisdom, and its adaptability to human nature. A study of the teachings of

the Quran would reveal that guidance so many-faceted and so perfectly adjusted, and so free from defaults and shortcomings cannot be the product of a human mind. In a situation that discloses a thousand needs, it is not enough to provide for only one or two. Such is the case with the Gospel. It emphasize one aspect and ignores all others We do not blame the Gospel for this onesidedness. It was the consequence of the prevailing attitude of the Jews. The guidance to their temperaments and their capacities.

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The teaching of the Gospel was adjusted to the requirements of the place and the time and the people. It was not directed to or meant for all people at all times. But the sweep of the Holy Quran is very wide. It provides guidance for all people at all times, and is not limited or subject to change. It proclaims : There is not a thing but We possess unbound stores thereof, only We send them down in regulated measures (15 : 22). The need of the Gospel was limited ; its teaching can be summarized within the space of a page. The need of the Quran is universal. It aims at universal improvement. Its purpose is to lift those who are at the level of the beasts to the level of human beings, to civilize them through the inculcation and observance of moral and legal values, and then to prepare them for the experience and enjoyment of divine communion. This is a brief statement, but it has number'ess aspects. As the Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, Animists and others were all astray, the Holy Prophet was commanded to proclaim : O Mankind, verily I am Allah's Messenger to you all (7 : 159). It was necessary that the Quran should comprise all teachings that had been revealed from time to time, all verities that had been expounded through the Prophets to the dwellers upon earth. The Quran addressed itself to the whole of mankind, and not only to a particular people or country or age. The Gospel was intended for a particular people. That is why Jesus repeated : I am not come but for the lost sheep of the House of Israel. Some

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people allege that the Quran merely repeats that which is set out in the Torah. This short-sighted attitude incited some Christian polemists to expatiate on the theme of the lack of need of the Quran. Had they possessed true wisdom and real understanding they would not have gone astray. Such people assert : the Torah forbids adultery and so does the Quran ; the Quran asserts the Unity of God and so does the Torah. So, what is the difference ? This is a delicate and complicated question, which might confuse a person who is not well instructed. The resolving of such questions is not possible without divine grace. The superior merits of the Quran in this respect reveal themselves at their due time. That there is accord between the Quran and the Torah is a fact and that is as it should be. But the Torah sets forth barely the commandments, without exposition, and the Quran supports them with reasoning. Human capacity was in an elementary stage at the time of the revelation of the Torah. The Quran expounds the benefits of worship, and the beneficence of moral values, and sets forth all this with reason and arguments so that no room should be left for dissent on the part of those gifted with understanding. Man's intellect had continued to develop since the days of Adam, and by the time of the revelation of the Quran the circle had been completed The Quran proclaimed : Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets (33 : 41).

This is the miracle of the Quran, that it does not leave one who believes in it to depend upon something else. It supports that which it sets forth with reasons and arguments and thus gives complete satisfaction. The Quran has furnished every commandment with a perfect set of reasons. These are the two principal features that distinguish the Quran from the Torah. The latter does not reason ; the reader has to discover the reason for each claim and commandment. The Quran furnishes every type of reason and argument in support of that which it sets forth and does not call for obedience

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on the basis of authority alone. It satisfies reason through its fine process of argument and persuasion. Secondly, the Torah addresses itself to a limited group, and the Quran addresses all mankind till the end of time. (Resport of the Annual confernece, 1897, pp. 84-88).

Abdullah bin Abi Sarah also simultaneously exclaimed : So blessed is Allah, the Best of creators (23.15) ; at the time when this verse was revealed. It may then be asked what distinguishes a human utterance from the Divine Word ? In the first place, any claim to match the Divine Word must in quantity be the equal of one chapter of the Quran, as Allah has proclaimed : If you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down to our Servant, then produce a chapter like unto it. It is not said: Produce a verse like unto it ; or : Produce a phrase like unto it. It is true that the Divine Word is also composed of phrases and words that were current among the disbelievers, then their sequence, juxtaposition and syntax, etc., invested them collectively with a miraculous quality. A miracle in Divine action also possesses the same quality because of the totality of its component elements, as is the case with the Divine Word. However, even brief phrases which form components of the Divine Word possess a distinction on account of the exalted connotations that they carry both inherently and also as emanating from their juxtaposition. Everyone may not be able to penetrate to all the verities embedded in them, but there is no doubt that they are illuminated with a light which is their essence. In the same way this phrase : So blessed is Allah, the Best of creators ; possesses a distinction by virtue of its juxtaposition to its preceding verses. It is invested with a spiritual philosophy which is a unique miracle in itself. (Zameemah Baraheen Ahmadiya, Part V, pp. 29-30).

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The literary excellence of the Holy Quran is so exalted that even its fair-minded opponents are compelled to acknowledge it. The Quran proclaimed a challenge : Then produce a

chapter like unto it; but no one has dared to take it up through the centuries. The Arabs who were renowned for their eloquence and were in the habit of reciting their compositions to large gatherings on special occasions, confessed their inability to take up the challenge. The excellence of the Quran is not confined to its literary expression, but extends to and comprises its exalted meaning and import also. The excellence of its sequence and of its syntax is more than matched by the truth and wisdom of its contents, and this combination of excellences is beyond the capacity of a human being.

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The Quran has announced that the Holy Prophet : Recites pure Scriptures which comprise lasting commandments (98. 3-4). Literary artists realize how difficult it is to combine literary excellence with pure teachings and lofty moral instruction, more particularly such attractive and effective instruction which should succeed in replacing low morals and evil practices with high and pure morals. The low moral condition of the Arabs of the time of the Holy Prophet is well known. They had for centuries been steeped in every type of vice. Yet within the short space of twenty-three years the moral and spiritual magnetism of the Holy Prophet worked a tremendous revolution throughout the land. This was achieved through the guidance contained in the Quran.

Take the briefest chapter in the Quran and you will find that it comprises the highest and most perfect teaching along with the loftiest literary excellences. Consider Sura Ikhlas (112), how it has set forth in the briefest compass every aspect of the Unity of the Divine and has refuted every form of asscciation with Him. Or, turn to the Fatiha and observe its miraculous qualities. It is a short chapter comprising only seven brief verses, and yet it constitues a summary and an index of the whole Quran. It contains illuminating guidance on the Existence of God, Divine attributes, the need for prayer, the ways and means of its acceptance, useful and beneficial prayers

and safeguards against following harmful ways. With all this it furnishes a refutation of all false doctrines.

It is a common feature of religious books and of speeches and writings on religion that they criticize and find fault with the doctrines and teachings of other faiths, but seldom do they present a better substitute for that which they criticize and condemn. But the Quran possesses the distinction that when it condemns and rejects a teaching or doctrine and exposes its falsehood, it also sets forth the true doctrine and teaching in juxtaposition to the false. (Al-Hakam, Vol. VII, No. 17, 10 May 1903, pp. 1-2).

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In the time of the Holy Prophet oratory and eloquence were practised at a very high level in Arabia and were greatly esteemed. So he was granted a miracle of the same kind in the Holy Quran. Poets of the age worked magic with their compositions; a few verses were all they needed to achieve and attain whatever they desired. With their poetry they could inspire and arouse every type of emotion; as is the case with music among western peoples today. The poets of Arabia wove the magic of words as an instrument in every situation, and with the help of this magic they roamed in every valley (26 : 226). So God sent down His word and made it a challenge by announcing: If you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a chapter like unto it. Despite the knowledge that the challenge itself had prophesied that they would never be able to do it, they made no attempt to take it up. History mentions no such attempt. Thus God established a miracle of the type in which the age excelled. (Al-Hakam, Vol, VI, No. 15, 25 April 1902, p. 7).

In the verse: If you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down to Our servant, then produce a chapter like unto it; most commentators have construed the expression "like unto it" as meaning that a matching composition

should also comprise prophecies as does the Holy Quran. (Al-Badar, Vol. I, No. 7, 12 December 1902, p. 51).

Whose fuel are men and stones : means that the Fire is fed on men who leaving aside God render worship or homage to other beings or things or who themselves willingly receive such homage ; as has been said at another place : Surely, you and that which you worship beside Allah, are destined to be the fuel of hell (21 : 99). The other fuel of hell are the idols. The meaning is that but for this type of fuel there would be no hell. (Report of the Conference of Great Religions, p. 137).

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Sirat Khatamun Nabiyyin

By The Late Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad

Hijra marks the beginning of a new era. To understand fully its signi.icance and some aspects of the Holy Prophet's life in Medina it is essential to know Yasrab and its inhabitants. The town of Medina was known as Yasrab and after the Holy Prophet's migration the place was callad Medinatul Rassul, the city of the Prophet, and with the passage of time simply Medina. Medina is an ancient city of Hijaz which lies about 250 miles north of Mecca on the eastern coast of the Red Sea. It is situated on the trade route from Mecca to Syria. Because of its situation the Meccans were known to the people of Medina as sometimes the trade caravans instead of bypassing it made a diversion and halted at Medina on their way to Syria. Some of the traders had developed close relations with the citizens of Medina.

Topographically Medina lies in a valley surrounded by small hills one of which is Uhad were a bloody battle was fought between the Muslims and the Meccans. In comparision to the rest of Arabian p.ninsula it receives more rainfall which at best is scanty. The soil is comparatively fertile and the main occupation of its inhabitants was agriculture. Its weather is extremely hot in summer and quite cold in winter. Refugees from Mecca found the climate of Medina unhealthy. Malaria and other seasonal epidemics affected their health adversely. Hadith records the prayers of the Holy Prophet for deliverance from these calamities. As a result of his prayers the climate improved considerably and the Muhajirin were spared from these occasional bouts of fever.

The populace of Medina was scattered. Every tribe had its own colony with a fortress to defend itself against hostile tribes. Yasrab was founded by the people of Amaleeq tribe

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who planted date gardens and constructed small fortresses. The next to come were the Jews. Historians differ as to their origin : whether they were Arabs or had migrated from outside the Arabian peninsula. Majority of the historians are of the view that they were Israelites who migrated to Arabia. Later a number of Arabs were converted to Judaism. The Jews either killed or drove out Banu Amaleeq and established themselves at Medina. These Jews were divided into three tribes : Banu Qainqah, Banu Nazir and Banu Quraiza. They had build small fortresses scattered over and around the neighbourhood of Medina. Their main occupation was trade though some of them were engaged in agriculture. Banu Qainqah were mainly artisans. As the Jews were educated and more advanced than the local inhabitants they wielded considerable influence over the nieghbouring tribes and became quite powerful. During this period two tribes of Banu Qahtan ; Aus and Khazraj migrated to Medina. These two tribes were closely knit and remained aloof from the Jews but ultimately became their allies. So much so that they used to name their children after the Jews and raised their sons in Jewish faith. This subjugation of the Aus and Khazraj by the Jews led them to commit astrocities which subsequently resulted in hostilites, between the two. The former tribes, with the assistance of the ruler of Ghasan state had the leaders of Jews murdered. This broke the Jewish hegemony. But it also brought the two tribes, which so far had excellent relations with each other under the shadow of Jews supremacy, into clash with each other. The inter-tribal wars, which had been fanned by the Jews, weakend the Aus and Khazraj tribes. Aus sought the aid of Banu Nazir and Banu Quraiza against Khazraj who were assisted by Banu Qaniqah and the city was plunged into a perpetual state of war. These wars, last of which the battle of Ba'as was fought during the ministry of the Holy Prophet, so much weakend the two warring tribes that they were forced to come to peace and select one Abdullah bin Ubi bin Salul as their leader. Arrangements were under way for

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his instalation as the combined leader of the two tribes when the message of Islam reached Medina. It changed the situation completely. The migration of the Holy Prophet to Medina deprived Ibn Ubi bin Salul of this coveted honour. Although he outwardly embraced Islam after the battle of Badar but he never forget his loss of leadership and never let pass an opportunity to sow the seeds of dissention among the Muslims.

When the news of the arrival of the Holy Prophet reached Medina the city resounded with the shouts of Allah-O-Akbar. The Muslims donned their arms and rushed out to welcome him. It was a historic occasion. The man, the Prophet, the beloved of God, in whose person prophethood was to reach its zenith is forced to flee from his beloved city by the relentless persecution of his kith and kin to seek shelter in a town which is alien to him. But God infused such love and devotion in the hearts of his *Ansars* which put to shame the bonds of blood. The destiny of Medina and the tribes of Aus and Khazraj got so interwoven with the divine scheme about Islam that it is impossible to mention one without the other. No doubt Islam lifted the beduins of Arabia from the lowest state of degradation to the pinnacle of glory and eminence. It was the miracle of Islam. History fails to present a parallel where the followers of a religion have nurtured the young plant of their faith with such love and unflinching devotion as the companions of the Holy Prophet did. The faces of Ansar lit up when they found the Holy Prophet among them. In his person they found the bounties of this world and the hereafter. Bukhari records the saying of Braa Bin Aazib that he never saw greater pleasure and happiness on the faces of the Ansar as he did on the occasion of the Holy Prophet's arrival in Medina.

The Holy Prophet for reasons not recorded in the books of history stopped at Qubba on the outskirt of Medina. His first task was to build a mosque there, the first in the history of Islsm. After staying at Qubba for about ten days

he arrived in Medina among great rejoicing. Young girls of Medina sang joyously : "Today the full moon has dawned upon us from the hills of Widaa. The glorification of God has become incumbent upon us for ever".

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The Holy Prophet had already decided that he would stay with Banu Najjar, his relatives through mother of Abu Muttalib to avoid unnecessary jealousy and acrimony among the Ansars. He told the over-anxious members of Banu Najjar, who were vieying to lead his camel to their houses ; to let his camel free. She was under God's guidance. The camel finally sat down on an empty lot belonging to two orphans. He stayed at Abu Ayyub Ansari's house which was close to the plot. The peace of land was purchased and a rough structure of a mosque and his quarters made up by stones and palm leaves began to rise. The mosque was 105 feet long, 90 feet wide and 10 feet high with mud floor which was later improvised by rounded pebbles as it used to turn into slush after rains. The mosque faced the Qiblatul Awal, Baitul Muqqadus but was later changed after the revelation came about the change of Qibla. In the corner of the mosque a raisad platform was constructed called as *Suffa*. It served as a-home for the poor and those without work. They were looked after by the Holy Prophet and the *Sahaba* but inspite of that they sometimes would go without food as did the Prophet. The quarters for the Holy Prophet's residence consisted of one room fifteen feet by ten feet with a door opening into the courtyard of the mosque. Later on when he married more wives more rooms were added.

The mosque became the focal point for the Muslims. It also served for the conduct of state affairs, as hall of justice, as state guest-house and on occasions to house the prisoners of war. Sir William Muir writes :

> "But though rude in material, and comparatively insignificant in demension, the Mosque of Muhammad is glorious in the history of Islam. Here the Prophet and his companions spent the greater portion of their

time ; here the daily service, with its oft-recurring prayers, was first publicly established ; here the great congregation assembled every week, and trembled often while they listened to the orations of the Prophet and his messages from Heaven. Here he planned victories. From this spot he sent forth envoys to Kings and emperors with summons to embrace Islam. Here he received embassies of contrite and believing tribes ; and from hence issued commands which carried consternation amongst the rebellious to the very outskirts of the Peninsula. Hard by, in the room of Ayesha, he yielded up the ghost ; and there he lies buried".

The mosque and the Quarter far the Holy Prophet were constructed in about seven months. The Holy Prophet moved to his new residence with his wife Sauda. Some of the muhajirin companions of the Prophet bought lands from the Ansars adjacent to the mosque and constructed their own houses ; others not no lucky were spread over the town of Medina.

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In the beginning there was no fixed method for calling the faithful to the prayers. People themselves judged the time and gathered for the prayers ; this was unsatisfactory. After the completion of the mosque the need of some method was actually felt. Some suggested the use of ناقوس (wooden gong) like the Christians while others favoured the Jewish way of using Booq.

Hazrat Umar suggested that some person may be appointed to call the faithfull to prayers. The Holy Prophet liked the suggestion and this duty was entrusted to Bilal. He would call at the top of his voice at the prescribed hours for the people to come for prayers. The same cry was used to call the Muslims for a meeting. Later on Abdullah bin Zaid heard in a dream the words presently used for the call. He related his dream and words to the Holy Prophet that he saw a person calling people for prayers in these words. The Holy Prophet said :

this dream is from God. He instrucfed Abdullah to teach the words to Bilal. When Bilal first called the faithful for the prayers in these words Umar came running to the Holy Prophet and told him that he too had dreamt exactly the same words for the call to prayers. In another tradition it is stated that the Holy Prophet said these words were revealed to him too. Thus came in practice the present system of the call for prayers. This method surpasses all other systems in simplicity and beau y. Unity of God and the attestation of the Prophethood of Muhammad is voiced from the small hamlets to the metropolitan cities of the Islamic world five times a day. Thus a gist of the teachings of Islam is conveyed in a beautiful manner to the people.

Prayer which is placed at the top of the Islamic form of worship had already became obligatory for the Muslims during the Meccan period. Apart from the three *Rakaahs* of *Maghrib* prayers the rest had only two *Rakaahs* but after Hijra the Holy Prophet raised the number of Raka'ahs from two to four except for Fajjar prayers after the revelation and retained two in case of journey. Thus the state of residence and journey were differentiated. The law brought by the Holy Prophet has this unique distinction that it caters for eventualities and strikes a middle path. Practical difficulties are catered for. Hence in case of prayers, changed and abnormal conditions allow changed form from the normal procedure. If conditions compel one to say his prayer in sitting posture or even lying down in case of illness, it is allowed in the Law. Similarly it is incumbent to turn one's face towards Mecca while performing prayers but if the direction is not clear or one is travelling and the fixed direction cannot be maintained then it is permissible to face in the direction of one's mount. Again ablution is a pre-requisit of prayers but if water is not available or one is ill than this condition is also waived.

Even in case of other injunctions Islam allows certain changes in the prescribed form to suit the particular need ; which shows the universality of its message. Islam lays stress on the spirit,

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rather than the form. The body of the forms is to protect the spirit but wherever a form becomes a hinderance than the spirit is retained and the form changed or in cases even abandoned.

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It would not be out of place to mention here that the Holy Prophet laid great stress on prayers He said that prayer is the spiritual ascendance of a believer. He also added that prayer is a form of worship where one is in communion with God. He was so fond of prayers that apart from the five obligatory prayers he also regularly said *Tahajjud* prayers in the middle of the night. It is mentioned in the traditions that sometimes his feet would swell on account of standing for a long time. He used to say that prayers are the delight of his eyes. He would counsel his companions that would they realize the value of the prayers they would come to the mosque even if they have to drag themselves on their knees. In his last illness when he was in coma often and was in great distress he once lifted the curtain of the mosque and his face lit up with joy when he saw his companions saying their prayers. According to some traditions the last sentence that he uttered was الصلوة و ما ملكت ايمانهم admonishing his followers not to forget prayers and those under bondage.

So far no Jew had accepted him though some Christians may have joined the fold. Very few Jews embranced Islam during his life time and the first to join the fold was Hissin Bin Salam after Hijra. He wielded great influence among the Jews on account of his learning. He become influenced by the teachings of the Holy Prophet while he was still at Mecca and on his arrival he embraced Islam. He wished his people to accept Islam. He suggested to the Holy Prophet to call the leaders of Jew tribes and preach them the message and ask their opinion about him. If they express good opinion about him the revelation that he had accepted Islam might prove instrumental in opening their hearts to the truth. The Holy Prophet called the leaders and the heads of Jewish

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tribes of Medina and preached them the message of Islam. It did not produce any result. He then enquired about their views regarding the learning and integrity of Hissin bin Salam. They unaminously praised him highly. He then enquired from them would they embrace Islam if Hissin did so? They replied that this could never happen. At this stage the Holy Prophet called Hissin who was hiding near by. He came out of the hiding and thus addressed his people. "O my people fear God and do not invoke His wrath. You know well that Muhammad is mentioned in your books. He is the same prophet who had been promised to you. Fear God and do not hasten to deny him". At first the Jews were flaberghasted and then gathering their wits denied him. They started accusing him to be a liar and cheet and left the meeting abusing him violently. The Holy Prophet changed Hissin's name to Abdullah and he is known in the books of History and the tradition by this name. The Holy Prophet usually did not change the name of a convert except if it was idolatrous in meaning or nature. Although Hissin's name is not idolaterous but probably being the first Jewish convert he may have thought that a pure Islamic name would be better in his case.

Salman Farsi, a native of Persia and a follower of Zoarastrian faith, had left his home in search of truth. He embraced Christianity while in Syria. He was made a slave in one of the numerous marauding raids. He embraced Islam on the arrival of the Holy Prophet to Medina, and bought his freedom from his master. He first took part in Jehad on the occasion of Battle of Trench. The Trench, a novelty for the Arabs was dug on his advice. He was a very pious man leading a life of austerity. The Holy Prophet once said about him "Salman is from the House'. When the verse, وآخرين منهم لما يلحقوا بهم was revealed the companions enquired the Holy Prophet who these people were? Placing his hand on the shoulders of Salman Farsi, He replied that even if faith was lost and ascended to the Pleiad a person from the persian lineage would bring it back to earth.

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Majority of the poeple of the tribes of Aus and Khazraj had not yet embraced Islam and continued practicing their faith. Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salul had outwardly accepted Islam but at heart remained its enemy and became the leader of the dissemblers. Similarly Abu Amar who had travelled a great deal was leading the life of a hermit. He was inclined towards Christianity and posed himself as an independent religious teacher. He opposed the Holy Prophet and later left Medina for Mecca out of sheer hatred for him. He sided with the Meccans in the battle of Uhad in which ironically his son died fighting on the side of Muslims. He remained in Mecca till its conquest and then took up residence at Taif. When Taif too fell to the Muslim army he left for Syria to conspire against the Muslims. When he was still in Medina he used to call the Prophet 'the expelled and the friendless one' out of contempt. It is ominous that he died like one.

The populace of Medina were divided into two groups, the locals (Ansars) and the imigrants (Muhajirin). The imigrants, poor or otherwise had almost lost everything when they left Mecca but Ansars treated them like brothers and left no stone unturned to make them feel welcome. To cement this relationship further the Holy Prophet suggested that they be matched into pairs. Taking into consideration mutual affiliations he joined them into bonds of brotherhood The display of love between them surpassed the love of real brothers. The Ansars suggested to the Holy Prophet to divide their orchards equally between them but as the Muhajirin had not only had no experience of agriculture but also considered it below their status it did not come off ; then they made alternative proposal to divide the income equally between them. This continued for sometime but later the Muhajirin engaged themselves in trade and become financially independent. It is stated that Muhajirin feeling indebted to such extraordinary treatment at the hands of Ansar approached the Prophet that they fear that they may exclusively reap all the rewards from

God. The Holy Prophet allayed their fear saying that when they would express their gratitude and pray for them they too would not be deprived of God's bounties. Hazrat Abdul Rehman bin Auf was joined in brotherhood to Saad ibn ul Rabi. Saad divided his entire wealth into two parts and offered one to Abdul Rehman bin Auf. He even went to the extent of offering one wife out of his two to him that he may marry her after legal separation. Abdul Rehman thanked him and asked him to simply introduce him to the market, He started his own business and became very wealthy. This bond of unity extended even to inheritence which after the revelation in this respect by which only blood relations were made legal heirs to inheritance was abandoned.

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This relationship served in many ways.

1. Muhajirin were to a great extent spared from anxiety and insecurity which their uprooting could cause.
2. The pain of separation from relatives and the dear ones were to a great extent mitigated by this new relationship which if not stronger was in no way inferior to blood relationship.
3. It helped to strengthen the bond of relationship of love and unity essential for religious, political and social affinity.
4. It created job opportunities for the poor and the needy Muhajirin.

As stated earlier the populace of Medina were divided in two distant religious groups, the Jews and the Pagans. With the advent of Islam a third community came into existtance, and with the arrival of the Holy Prophet a fourth element, that of dissemblers, appeared too. His advent was like the rain which brings forth all kinds of growth, good as well as bad. Out of this assemblage, Muslims whether Ansar or Muhajirin were united on one hand. They differed in their customs and habits and to became united under the old Arab traditions

was impossible ; but the magnetic personality of the Holy Prophet and the faith of Islam became the point of unity. The second group was that of the dissemblars. It was a dangerous sore within the body of Muslims. Outwardly Muslims, they harboured enmity and hatred towards the Muslims in general and the Holy Prophet in particular. Their ulterior designs created extremely dangerous situations for the Muslims and the Holy Prophet. As they outwardly professed Islam they were bound to live wite the Muslim and accept the authority of the Holy Prophet. The third group was that of the Pagans. They constituted a large section of the population of Medina before Hijra but within a short time ceased to exist as a separate community and Medina was purged of idolatory and polytheism. In accordance with Arab custom they were obliged to live in amity with the Muslim majority and accept the authority of the Holy Prophet. The fourth group, that of the Jews constituted a powerful independent entity. Realizing the looming danger from the Quraish of Mecca and the need of peace and harmony within Medina the Holy Prophet saw the need of a treaty with the Jews. Shortly after his arrival he called the leaders of the Muhajirin, the tribal leaders of Aus and Khazraj tribes and the Jews and suggested the need for such an understanding among the three dominant groups of the city for the maintenance of law and order and its defence against external attack. The treaty was drawn after mutual consultation.

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It consisted of the following provisions :

1. Muslims and Jews would live in peace and would not transgress against each other.
2. There would be complete religious freedom for all.
3. The life and property of the citizens of Medina would be considered sacred except in case of the infrigement of the law.
4. All disputes would be referred to the Holy Prophet and the decision would be in accordance with the law governing the individual concerned i.e. Jewish

law would be applicable fo the Jews and Islamic law to the Muslims.

5. No party would wage war without the permission of the Holy Prophet.
6. Each party i.e. Jews and Muslims would help each other in case of aggression.
7. In case of attack on Medina all parties would be bound to defend it.
8. Jews would not render any assistance or give shelter to anyone from the Quraish of Mecca or their allies.
9. In case of war the parties signatory to the treaty would bear their own expenses.
10. No one would be considered above the law and all offenders would be liable for punishment.

This treaty laid the foundation of an orderly government by which each party, independent in its internal and religious matters, came under a central authority headed by the Holy Prophet.

(Translated from Urdu)

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